

# Debate on old documents found in county storage

ERIN FRANCE  
Athens Banner-Herald

WATKINSVILLE, Ga. (AP) — Frank knew he wasn't going to find a woman he wanted to marry in Assumption Parish, La., he told his brother in a letter dated March 14, 1861, that turned up in Oconee County's tourism office.

"We have girls here, but they are all French, and I don't like the breed much," he wrote.

Instead, he'd head back to "Old Clarke" to find a wife, he said.

Frank's letter — along with wills, deeds, postcards, pictures and other letters now in the tourism office's possession — could be given or loaned to the University of Georgia libraries, or they just might stay in Oconee County.

Commissioners talked about the future of the old documents, many of which are from late 19th and early 20th centuries, during a recent meeting.

UGA has the resources to care for old documents and preserve them for future generations, said Commissioner Margaret Hale, who works for UGA libraries.

Commission Chairman Melvin Davis would like to see the papers stay in Oconee County, he said.

"I'd like to see them preserved, but I'd also like to see them here," he said.

Oconee County Tourism Director Peggy Holcomb discovered the antique papers last year in an office used for storage in a rented property across the street from the courthouse.

"It was such a mystery," Holcomb said. "I don't know how they got there."

Frank's letter sheds light on how a man from the region



Associated Press/Athens Banner-Herald David Tulis

**Justin Martin, assistant tourism director for Oconee County, inspects old papers which include wills, receipts, letters and postcards at the welcome center in Watkinsville, Ga. The facility has moved several times in the past few years and during one of the moves tourism director Peggy Holcomb found an envelope with a variety of old papers from the late 19th century and early 20th century that will now be preserved.**

tried to make his way in the world. He wrote to his brother about the different work and businesses he'd attempted, many of which left him broke.

When he landed a job working in a Louisiana mill making \$800 a year, Frank said he was ready to get back in touch with his family.

"I am now willing to write often and full, but if I had not made a raise, you would not have heard from me any more forever, but I am all right now," he wrote.

Frank's letter is well-preserved, but the county would have to find a way to preserve the documents from changes in light, temperature and humidity — all things that can damage paper, Hale said.

Oconee County residents still could study the documents if they were preserved and kept at UGA, and the county could have copies of the

papers made, Hale said. Commissioners decided to investigate how much it would cost to preserve the documents in Watkinsville.

"They are still in pretty darn good shape," Holcomb said of the found documents.

While the commissioners debate what to do with the documents, the papers are back in Holcomb's office in Oconee County's new welcome center on North Main Street in Watkinsville.

There's no response letter to Frank's included in the packet, but he did ask his brother for help in finding a wife "from where I know the breed."

"If there is any old maids or young widows there that is able to support themselves, tell them that I am in the market and give me their name and address, and I will propose forthwith," Frank wrote.

# Supporting and caring for those living with Alzheimer's

Careful Planning Makes Holidays Fun and Safe for Everyone

The Alzheimer's Association reminds us that with the holidays just around the corner, a little planning can make a big difference for those who are caring for a loved one with dementia. Their website notes that the needs of a loved one who is living with dementia require family and friends to be mindful of their special requirements when planning parties and holiday gatherings.

- Make preparations together: Encourage your loved one to join in those activities you know they can still manage.

- Keep decorations simple: Avoid loud decorations and blinking lights as these can cause disorientation. Do not use candles as they double as a safety hazard.

- Keep gatherings quiet and slow-paced: A calm, quiet environment is usually best. Keep on schedule. Try to keep activities as close to your normal meal and sleep times as possible.

- Adjust your expectations: Adjust traditions that are no longer possible...create new, simple traditions.

For more information about Alzheimer's disease and planning for the holidays visit alz.org.

## Get Involved with the Alzheimer's Memory Walk

The Central Ohio Alzheimer's Association has honored me by asking me to serve as the honorary chairperson of their Delaware County Memory Walk. The walk will take place at 9 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 6, at the Polaris Fashion Place Mall, and we hope to recruit an enthusiastic group of supporters for our Council for Older Adults team. You can help by joining our team, soliciting financial support, and walking, or by donating money to our team. If you want to help, you can sign up online at [memory-walk2010.kintera.org/delaware](http://memory-walk2010.kintera.org/delaware) or you can contact our team captain, Jennifer Spicer: [jennifer@growingolder.org](mailto:jennifer@growingolder.org) or (740) 363-6677 ext 127. It is easy to sign up online, join our team and recruit others online, but if you would prefer Jen to do it for you, she will be happy to do so. Also, if you would prefer to donate offline, Jen will also be very happy to accept your cash or checks at the Center for Older Adults, 800 Cheshire Rd. in Delaware. This is a great cause, so please help me walk the walk on Nov. 6. Thanks.

## Evening of Jazz & Wine to benefit HelpLine

Join the staff and volunteers of HelpLine for a fun evening of entertainment and good food and help support a local organization that always answers the call for help in our community. This fundraising event is from 4 to 7 p.m. this Saturday, Oct. 23, at the 1808 American Bistro, 29 E. Winter Street in Delaware. The event will feature entertainment by the Doc Holloway Jazz Trio,



## AgeWise with Bob Horrocks

*Aging is everyone's business. Whether you have an older family member, an older friend or neighbor, or an older co-worker or employee, the aging of our population is and will have an impact on all of us. This column is intended to provide a potpourri of interesting, up-to-date information that you will find useful and relevant to your busy life.*

silent and live auction items including a day of pampering at 1820 Collective, premium red and white wines and hors d'oeuvres. Tickets are \$30 per person or \$50 per couple. Purchase are available online at [helpinedel-mor.org/jazzevent.php](http://helpinedel-mor.org/jazzevent.php) or call 740-363-1835.

## Learn More about Civic Engagement and Older Adults

The Ohio Department of Aging notes that nearly 12,000 Ohioans turn age 60 each month. Over the past year, the Ohio Senior Civic Engagement Council has identified ways that older adults' continued engagement in employment, volunteering and lifelong learning positively impacts individuals and society. To learn more and to explore the Council's recommendations, visit the department's website at [aging.ohio.gov](http://aging.ohio.gov).

## Electing to Vote

Well, it is that time of year again and assuming that you are as sick of all the television ads as I am, you know that we are in what is sometimes referred to as "the silly season." It is time to vote. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, over half of those in the United States age 18 to 24 who are eligible to vote, don't do it. The voting rate for older adults, on the other hand, is about 90 percent for those who are eligible to vote. Obviously, those who are age 60 and above can have a huge impact on elections when they choose to vote. And, now you don't have to wait until Election Day. You can request an absentee ballot from the Board of Elections or go there in person to vote before Election Day. For information about the process and about what is on the ballot in Delaware County, you can consult the League of Women Voters' Voting Guide published in *The Delaware Gazette* and *Sunbury News* and broadly distributed at public locations throughout Delaware County. Remember, don't complain — vote!

## Meet the Heroes

Each year, the Delaware County Chapter of the American Red Cross hosts a wonderful event to honor local everyday heroes. The American Red Cross Heroes Breakfast is slated for 7:30 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 16 at Ohio Wesleyan University's Benes Room. The awards honor heroes from throughout the county in 8 categories. Heroes are selected for assisting or inspiring others. The Council for Older Adults is proud to once again sponsor the Senior Adult Hero Award which honors a per-

son or persons 65 years or older. Reservations are \$25 and can be made by calling the Red Cross office, 740-362-2021.

## Council Communicator Coming Soon

The next (November/December) edition of the Council Communicator is at the printer and will "hit the streets" very soon. The Council for Older Adults' newspaper will arrive in the *Sunbury News* on Thursday, October 21 and will be delivered in *The Columbus Dispatch* this coming Sunday, October 24 and in *The Delaware Gazette* next Monday, Oct. 25. The Communicator provides the latest in depth information of interest to older adults and their families residing in Delaware County. The newspaper is published 6 times a year, every other month and is also widely distributed at over 60 public locations throughout the county. If you can not find the next edition, stop by the Center for Older Adults at 800 Cheshire Rd and pick up a copy. This publication is partially supported through advertising, so if your business would like to reach our local older population, please contact Donna Meyer at the Council for Older Adults (740) 363-6677. (And please note, we are actively seeking new distribution sites for our newspaper. If you know of a local business or public building near you which might make a good distribution site for our free paper, please give us a call with your suggestions!)

## Halloween Boo-ffet

Come join your friends at the Center for Older Adults for a very special Halloween Boo-ffet from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 29. The menu will include: Scream of Pumpkin Soup, Witch's Hand Veggie Tray, Chicken Wings with Swamp Dip (BBQ & Hot), Snakes In The Grass Pork Tenderloin, Screaming Green Beans, Monster Mashed Potatoes, and a Spook-tacular Dessert Station! Reservations are requested at 740-203-2362. (Wear a costume to be entered into our door prize drawing!) Diners of all ages and species are welcome. Only \$12.50.

*Bob Horrocks is the Executive Director of the Council for Older Adults of Delaware County, which is located at the Center for Older Adults, 800 Cheshire Road, Delaware. He can be reached at [bob@growingolder.org](mailto:bob@growingolder.org). For more information about the Council visit [growingolder.org](http://growingolder.org).*



Estelle, resident of the healthcare center at Willow Brook Christian Village

Estelle was a counselor for older adults when she lived in Washington state. When she moved to Delaware she volunteered in the same capacity, and now she lives here at Willow Brook Christian Village close to her son and daughter-in-law and surrounded by loving caregivers who are her second family. If you have a loved one who isn't quite safe living at home anymore, pay a visit to Willow Brook.

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